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D E F E N C E
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S C R I P T U R E B A P T I S M :
I N A N S W E R
T O
A P A M P H L E T

ADDRESSED

*“To those who esteem the Essence of Religion of more
Importance than the Forms and Ceremonies.”*

By ISAIAH BIRT, *H*

PASTOR of the BAPTIST CHURCH at PLYMOUTH-DOCK.

“The Scripture forbids what it does not mention.”

TERTULLIAN.

P L Y M O U T H :

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A circular ink stamp from the British Museum is visible at the bottom center of the page. The words "BRITISH MUSEUM" are arranged around the perimeter of the circle. In the center of the stamp is a small emblem featuring a classical figure, likely Athena or Minerva, holding a shield and a spear.



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A D E F E N C E, &c.

THE Author of a penny pamphlet addressed "To those who esteem the Effence of Religion of more Importance than the Forms and Ceremonies," has (in the general opinion) done me the honor to suppose me the Author of eight questions, addressed "To all that love Truth and Peace." In opposing my sentiments as a Baptist, he has thought proper to employ contempt and irony, rather than cool discussion; and has descended to accusations so personal as to oblige me to publish my whole acquaintance with the questions; and to vindicate myself and practice from the severity of his censures. I do this the more readily, as the undoubted Author of the Pamphlet is of sufficient consequence to give importance to what he writes; and though I have reason to complain of the spirit in which he has written, I shall not fail to view him respectable as an opponent.

A few weeks since, a Friend sent me a parcel of books, and inclosed were about three dozen of the questions addressed "to all that love truth and peace:" this was not done by my desire, and my Friend said not a word to me about them. Of their Author I know nothing. At the close of one of our weekly meetings, I gave a few of them to the friends who were present; the rest, I gave to three persons who called on me and asked for them; I do not remember that I gave one to a Pædobaptist. This is the whole I know of, or have done with the questions.

I give this statement, not by way of apology, but to shew the difference betwixt the matter of fact, and what

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was "suspected" by our Author; and to ground an appeal to the candor of every man, whether I have violated any of the laws of propriety, or, in the least deserved the petulant severity bestowed on me by this Gentleman.

But, if I had printed the questions, and distributed them amongst my friends, in order to assist them in viewing the subject more clearly, and arguing it more accurately; had I not a right so to do? or, could any one on this account take reasonable offence? I greatly fear this Writer, with all he says of candor, the vital power of godliness, the cultivation of the graces of the Spirit, and this age of increasing liberality of sentiment, would, if he had it in his power, sadly circumscribe the rights of the Baptists; and respecting what they should say or do, would be to them a most rigid Dictator.

In this conclusion, I think he abundantly justifies me, by the manner in which he treats the supposed Author of the questions. He calls him, a 'zealous Anabaptist,'—'a water brother,'—'a sagacious interrogator;' and accuses him, either directly or indirectly, of throwing a bone of contention,—of endeavouring to sow discord among affectionate brethren,—of throwing a firebrand,—as having bidden adieu either to his honesty or his modesty,—as uncandid and arrogant,—of turning the still waters of the sanctuary into the waters of Meribah,—of attempting to break the peace of a christian society,—of compassing sea and land to make proselytes, and of enticing the sheep of one fold to forsake their companions and enter another! And, all this, courteous Reader, in a Pamphlet of only eight pages, and in the very same pages, he would have us to conceive of him, as the peculiar friend of candor,—a cultivator of the graces of the Spirit,—as in full accord with this age of increasing liberality of sentiment: And he ventures to
propose

propose this, as suited to the taste of those who have a superior regard for the essence of religion!!

It is lamentable that a man should be so lost, if not to his true character, yet to the temper in which he writes; and so weak, as to attempt thus to impose himself on the world.

But these are not all the evidences of his illiberality; the manner in which we administer Baptism, is mentioned also in most contemptuous terms; he calls it "passing through the pond," and he shamefully endeavours to accuse us of indecencies, in our solemnly devoting ourselves to the service of God. Indeed, this very uncandid Gentleman appears much more disposed to hold us up to ridicule,* than to confute our reasonings, or to support his own practice. If what is suggested at the close of his pamphlet be designed for me, I declare it to be a groundless calumny; and call upon him to cast off his veil, and to exhibit proof of his unworthy insinuations.

I cannot have any objection to his opposing my sentiments or practice with decency and argument. The field of controversy is open to all; and the person who endeavours to convince me that I am wrong deserves my thanks; but to misrepresentation and calumny I object; it is what I have not merited from any of my Christian Brethren, and what I dare not return to them.

Whatever may have been the temper in which this Author has written, I wish to pay the greatest respect to his arguments. He rests his vindication of Infant Baptism on three grounds; he intimates that he is a follower of a thousand who have refuted our objections, and scouted them from the field of controversy, and he

* Some would add, and to expose us to hatred also; indeed it is hard to say, what this Writer intends, by imputing to us a maxim, held only by the most rigid Papists, "That no peace can be kept with Hereticks."

reflects both on the modesty and ingenuity of the Baptist, who only dares to ask questions which affect his system.

Unconvinced by any thing which even he, with all his advantages has produced, I shall presume to object to many of his assertions, and endeavour wholly to refute his general conclusion; as it appears to me entirely subversive of an institution of Jesus Christ.

The *first* ground which he takes is, the covenant relation of Believers Children, their consequent right to the seals of the covenant, and the promise of God to Abraham.

Secondly. The precedents for Infant Baptism, which he professes to adduce from the New Testament.

Thirdly. The general practice of the Church since the time of Christ and his Apostles.

1st. He says, "Children were ever in covenant with God, and always entitled to the seals of that covenant, and they have never been expelled." That many and great (spiritual) promises are made to Believers Children more than to others. "I will be a God to thee and thy seed." "The promise is to you and your children." And it follows, that if children be entitled to the promises and blessings of the covenant, they have a right to the seals of the covenant;—that children are admitted by Baptism to many and great privileges. § See

§ In the 6th page this Writer says, "God has made Baptism a prerequisite to admission into the kingdom of Grace:" The consequences of such an assertion lie with him. I consider Baptism as a duty to be observed by those who are born again, and are already in the kingdom of Grace; therefore, no one with justice, can charge me with excluding any, from either the kingdom of Grace or Glory, merely on account of their not having received Baptism. The future happiness of ALL DYING INFANTS, without distinction, is that which meets my most firm and cordial belief; this belief is founded, not on their descent, nor on what we can do for them, but wholly on the tender mercies of God our Saviour. If any of my Pædobaptist Friends are of the same opinion, I rejoice: Many of those who first adopted their practice taught differently; and every body knows that the baptism of babes, is even now frequently resorted to, as necessary to their salvation.

Romans

Romans iii. 1, 2. He asks, "Was not Jesus when an infant in covenant? Did he not receive the seal of the covenant? Was not this covenant then the covenant of grace?"

This is the whole of our Author's reasoning on this head. On which, I observe,

(1st.) I am not able to discover either the propriety, or piety of what he asks concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, who is God over all, blessed for evermore.

(2d.) His idea of all the offspring of Believers being in the covenant of grace, is very contrary to the present appearance of things, as well, as many parts of God's word.

(3d.) Such a sentiment, is highly calculated to engender and cherish that carnal confidence and pride, so awfully apparent in the Jewish nation, and so justly reprov'd by our Lord and his servants. "Ye are of your father the devil," says Jesus Christ. "O generation of vipers, who hath warn'd you to flee from the wrath to come? and think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father," is the language of John the Baptist.

"They which are of the flesh, these are not the children of God. For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love," are the assertions of the Apostle Paul.

(4th.) Our Author gives to the offspring of each Believer, a much more general interest in the covenant of promise, than belonged to the immediate descendants of Abraham. The promise was very select and circumscribed in its application to his family: It did not apply to Ishmael, nor to the children the Patriarch had by Keturah, for only in Isaac was his seed called.†— On this subject I beg the reader's attention to the

† See Gen. xxi. 12.

sentiments of a most eminent Divine, who writes as follows: ‘Two privileges did God grant unto Abraham, upon his separation to a special interest in the old promise and covenant. First, that according to the flesh he should be the father of the Messiah, the promised seed, who was the very life of the covenant, the fountain and cause of all the blessings contained in it. That this privilege was temporary, the thing itself doth demonstrate.—Secondly. Together with this, he had also another privilege granted unto him; namely, that his faith, whereby he was personally interested in the covenant, should be the pattern of the faith of the Church in all generations; and that none should ever come to be a member of it, or a sharer in its blessings, but by the same faith that he had fixed on the seed that was in the promise, to be brought forth from him into the world. On the account of this privilege, he became the father of all them that do believe. For they that are of the faith, the same are the children of Abraham, Gal. iii. 7. Rom. iv. 11. As also heirs of the world, Rom. iv. 13. In that all that should believe throughout the world, being thereby implanted into the covenant made with him, should become his spiritual children. Answerable unto this twofold end of the separation of Abraham, there was a double seed allotted unto him. A seed according to the *flesh*, separated to the bringing forth of the Messiah according to the flesh; and a seed according to the *promise*, that is, such as by faith should have interest in the promise, or all the elect of God—Multitudes afterwards were of the carnal seed of Abraham, and of the number of the people separated to bring forth the Messiah in the flesh; and yet were not of the seed according to the promise, nor interested in the spiritual blessings of the covenant, because they did not personally believe, as

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' our Apostle declares, Heb. iv. And many afterwards,
 ' who were not of the carnal seed of Abraham, nor in-
 ' terested in the privilege of bringing forth the Messiah
 ' in the flesh; were yet designed to be made his spiritual
 ' seed by faith, that in them he might become *heir of*
 ' *the world*, and all nations of the earth be blessed in
 ' him. Now it is evident, that it is the second privilege
 ' and spiritual seed, wherein the church, to whom the
 ' promises are made, is founded, and whereof it doth
 ' consist; namely, in them, who by faith are interested
 ' in the covenant of Abraham, whether they be of the
 ' carnal seed or no. And herein lay the great mistake
 ' of the Jews of old, wherein they are followed by their
 ' posterity unto this day. They thought no more was
 ' needful to interest them in the covenant of Abraham,
 ' but that they should be *his seed* according to the flesh:
 ' and they constantly pleaded the latter privilege, as the
 ' ground and reason of the former. It is true, they
 ' were the children of Abraham according to the flesh;
 ' but, on that account, they can have no other privilege
 ' than Abraham had in the flesh himself: and this was,
 ' as we have showed, that he should be set apart as a
 ' special channel, through whose loins God would de-
 ' rive the promised seed into the world.—The former
 ' carnal privilege of Abraham and his posterity expiring
 ' on the grounds before mentioned, the ordinances of
 ' worship which were suited thereunto, did necessarily
 ' cease also. And this cast the Jews into great perplex-
 ' ities, and proved the last trial that God made of them.
 ' For whereas both these, namely, the carnal and spiri-
 ' tual privileges of Abraham's covenant, had been carried
 ' on together in a mixed way for many generations,
 ' coming now to be separated, and a trial to be made
 ' who of the Jews had interest in both, who in one
 ' only; those who had only the carnal privilege of being
 B ' children

‘children of Abraham according to the flesh, contended
 ‘for a share on that single account in the other also;
 ‘that is, in all the promises annexed to the covenant.—
 ‘But the foundation of their plea was taken away, and
 ‘the church, unto which the promises belong, remain
 ‘with them, that were heirs of Abraham’s faith only—
 ‘The church unto whom all the promises belong, are
 ‘only those who are heirs of Abraham’s faith; believing
 ‘as he did, and thereby interested in his covenant.’ *

If the Doctor’s reasoning in the above extract be just, all our Author says, or can say of the covenant and spiritual privileges of the offspring of Believers more than others, is most completely refuted; and the mistake and absurdity which this celebrated Writer charges on the Jews, applies with double force to the sentiments advanced by my Opponent. For, if it were absurd for the Jews, who were the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, to claim an interest in spiritual privileges and blessings merely on that account; how much more so must it be for the children of Gentiles, who are not Abraham’s seed, either by natural descent, or by being partakers of his faith, to claim a peculiar interest in a covenant made with him, and in a promise which belonged to his seed only. The relation which subsists between their parents and the Father of the faithful is only by faith, and entirely spiritual; but the relation in which they stand to their parents, is wholly natural and carnal; therefore, there is no evidence of the offspring of Believers having any peculiar relation to Abraham, or of their being more interested in the promise made to his seed than the children of others. In the gospel dispensation, *There is neither Jew nor Greek,—for we are all one in Christ*

* Dr. Owen’s Exercitat. on Epist. to Heb. in Booth’s Pædobap. Exam. Vol. II.

Jesus. And if we be Christ's, then we are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.†

It would appear then, that our Author when pleading for what he calls the covenant relation of Believers Children, is not so much defending a gospel truth, as an absurdity founded on a Jewish prejudice.

2d. We now attend to the precedents for Infant Baptism, which he professes to produce from the scripture.

He says, 'There is no need of any precept—Precedents there are—such as the Jailor and his House—Lydia and Stephanus.' It may be proper here to observe, that as Baptism came from God, and is an institution of Jesus Christ; his command can be our only warrant, and his word our only certain rule for the administration of this ordinance. Hence if babes are to be baptized, we might expect it to be most expressly commanded. But this Gentleman says, 'There is no need of any precept.' Are the precedents so numerous and so evident, as to supersede the necessity of a command? One would naturally expect this to be the case: and our Author *positively* asserts that there are precedents. It is true, the instances of Infant Baptism which he adduces are not many, but it would seem that they are most evident; for he does not like most of his Brethren state circumstances, and from them form presumptions in favour of the Baptism of Babes; no—he refers to persons, and mentions names: to use his own expression, "Know all men" that the Jailor, Lydia and Stephanus are brought forward by this Writer, as precedents for Infant Baptism!! We certainly must give him credit for producing as good precedents for the Baptism of Babes, as he could possibly be furnished with from the New Testament. What ever may be thought of my Opponent's "modesty," it is presumed,

† Gal. iii. 28, 29.

that all will admire his "ingenuity," for he, though a "thousand" have gone before him, has "found something new."

As the Scripture indisputably furnishes us with the fullest evidence both in precept and precedent for Believers Baptism, and this Gentleman having totally failed in producing either for the Baptism of Babes; I might here, with Tertullian's maxim, justly close my observations, "The scripture forbids what it does not mention."

But lest he should think me wanting in respect, by not attending him on all the ground which he has taken: 3d. I proceed to notice what he says on the general practice of the churches.

"If Infant Baptism be not of divine institution, how can it be accounted for, that the right of Infants to that ordinance was never so much as doubted, from the time of Christ and his Apostles until the year 410? Nor is there the least evidence that it was ever opposed by any man, or society of men, for many hundred years, from that time; from hence then it follows, that the baptizing infants was the general practice of the churches, derived from the Apostles time until the year 1505, at which time arose Menno, a native of Frieland, who was the FIRST PERSON that opposed Infant Baptism. This is as plain a fact as history and the writings of those times can make it. The Anabaptists therefore cannot boast of the antiquity of their practice; scarcely 300 years!!"

Were all this true, and he could prove it to demonstration, we should say, as the Protestants have said, with great propriety and success, to the Catholics, "The Bible only is the religion of the Baptists." In acts of religious worship, we acknowledge no authority less than that of inspiration.

But so far from its being a "plain fact" that the churches

churches immediately after the Apostles practised Infant Baptism, there is no certain evidence whatever that babes were baptized any where, or by any one, for the space of TWO HUNDRED YEARS after the birth of Jesus Christ. I will not follow the example of my Opponent, by giving my bare assertion: The following is the testimony of a learned Pædobaptist— The Baptism of Infants, in the two first centuries after Christ, was altogether unknown; but in the third and fourth, was allowed by some few. In the fifth, and following ages, it was generally received. The custom of baptizing Infants did not begin before the third age after Christ was born. In the former ages no trace of it appears—and it was introduced without the command of Christ.‡

Another Pædobaptist, of very considerable authority, says, "It appears that in the primitive times none were baptized but adults."* These testimonies are supported by Du Pin, who, when giving an account of the discipline of the church in the three first centuries, says, "They baptized those who were instructed and tried in the Christian religion: During the time of their instruction they were called Catechumens."† But not a word does he say of the Baptism of Infants, which renders it extremely improbable that to baptize them was the general practice, especially as it is mentioned by him in his account of the discipline of the fourth century.

Early in the third century Infant Baptism was introduced in Africa; but it does not appear to have been the general practice of the churches for a considerable time afterwards. If it were, how can it be accounted for, that Ambrose, though born of Christian parents, was baptized after he was chosen Bishop of Milan, in

§ Curcellæus in Booth's Pædobap. Exam. Vol. II. p. 76.

* Mr. Chambers's Cyclopædia, article Baptism.

† Hist. of the Church, vol. II. p. 77, 3d edit.

the year 374? or, that about the same period, John Chrysostom, the famous Patriarch of Constantinople, though most religiously educated, had given up the study of the law, and was devoted to the study of the holy scriptures previous to his baptism? Gregory, tho' his Father, was a Bishop when he was born, was not baptized until he arrived at years of maturity, and had finished his studies. Such reference might also be made to the baptism of Jerome, Nectarius, Augustine, and others who were born of Christian parents, and religiously educated, yet were not baptized until they became adults. A learned prelate says; 'The wisest of our Fathers in Christ did not come to baptism, until they were come to a strong and confirmed wit and age—There is no pretence of tradition, that the church in all ages did baptize all the Infants of Christian parents. It is more certain that they did not do it always, than that they did it in the first age. St. Ambrose, St. Hierom, and St. Austin, were born of Christian parents, and yet not baptized until the full age of a man, and more.'§ This does not look as if Infant Baptism were become the general practice of the churches even at the close of the fourth century: Nor can I see the possibility of reconciling these facts with the existence of such a uniform attendance to Infant Baptism, as is asserted by this Writer.

To baptize infants, is the general practice of the Church of England, of the Presbyterians, and of our Independent Brethren; but where have we instances of their children arriving at twenty, thirty, and nearly forty years of age, before they are baptized? Certainly, such instances as these, accord only with the sentiments and practice of the Baptist churches; and with them they are in full agreement.

§ Bishop Taylor in Booth's *Pædobap. Exam.* vol. II. p. 117.

So very unjustifiable is this Gentleman in asserting "that the baptizing infants was the general practice of the churches derived from the Apostles time," and that "this is as plain a fact as history, and the writings of those times can make it." And equally unsupported is he when he says that "Menno|| was the FIRST PERSON that opposed Infant Baptism." Does this Author suppose people to be so credulous as to believe this, merely on the authority of his assertion? or, does he presume on the Baptists being so ignorant, as not to be able to refute him? or does he believe them to be so extremely negligent, as not to attempt a refutation of that which is so palpably wrong? He says, "Menno (who lived in the 16th century) was the first person that opposed Infant Baptism," and that "the antiquity of our practice is scarcely 300 years."

It is in our power to confront and refute this statement with many historical facts. I will present the Reader with only one extract from Du Pin, an author fully competent to give information on this subject, and whom no one can possibly suspect of writing with a design to favour the Baptists. Thus he writes, 'In the beginning of the preceding (*i. e.* the 11th) century, there were discovered in several places of the kingdom of France; Hereticks accused of impious doctrines, who openly attacked the sacraments of the church, and despised its most holy ceremonies. The severity used against such as were found out, did not hinder the in-

|| Menno, who was originally a Popish priest, joined the Baptists about the year 1536, when they "were in the most discouraging situation that can well be imagined." He became a most laborious and useful minister amongst them; and Mosheim says, "He appears to have been a man of probity, of a meek and tractable spirit, gentle in his manners, pliable and obsequious in his commerce with persons of all ranks and characters, and extremely zealous in promoting practical religion and virtue, which he recommended by his example, as well as by his precepts." Eccle. Hist. Cent. XVI, sect. iii. part ii, chap. 3.

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‘creafing of that feft; fo that in this (*i. e.* the 12th) century abundance of Hereticks† appeared.

‘The firft were Peter de Bruis, and an hermit called Henry: They began to dogmatize in Provence, from whence the latter came to Lausanne, and afterwards went to the country of Mans: This fell out about the Year 1110.

‘While Henry was preaching in France, Peter de Bruis published his errors in Provence. HE CON- DEMNED THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS, AND RE-BAPTIZED THE ADULT. He did not approve the celebration of mafs, and taught that alms and prayers were of no ufe to the dead: A doctrine fo feditious raifed great troubles in church and ftate: Nothing was feen in Provence but *re-baptized Christians*, churches profaned or destroyed, altars overturned, and croffes burnt. He went from thence to Languedoc, where he published the fame errors in Touloufe, and other cities, till he was feized and burnt alive at St. Giles’s, in Languedoc. There were alfo Hereticks at Perigueux, at the fame time, who taught almoft the fame errors. We find juft fuch Hereticks in Italy, who took the name of Cathari—They all denied the neceffity of Baptifm, (*i. e.* Infant Baptifm) and the real prefence of the body and blood of Jefus Chrift in the eucharift.

‘Arnold, a native of Brefcia, who came from Italy to France, taught almoft the fame errors touching Infant Baptifm and the eucharift; who having gone to Rome, had a great number of difciples there, but having been driven from thence, he was taken and burnt alive.—Thirty of thefe Hereticks going from France into England, towards the year 1160, did likewise propofe to fow their doctrine there, but they were feized and exterminated.

† Du Pin was a Roman Catholic, confequently he gives the appellation of Hereticks to all who oppofed Popery.

‘The Hereticks we have been speaking of were condemned in the council of Toulouse, in 1116; in the general Lateran council, in 1139; in an assembly of Bishops held in England, at Oxford, in 1160; and in a council at Tours, in 1163. Their number increasing in Languedoc and Gascony, they were legally condemned at Lombes in 1176, and at Toulouse in 1178. They retired to Albi, from whence they were called Albigenes.’†

Far be it from me to accuse my Opponent of dishonest intentions; but I can by no means exculpate him from a charge of great negligence, and of manifesting much more concern to discredit the Baptists, than to search for the truth relative to their practice. I appeal to the candor and justice of every person who reads the above extract, whether any thing can be more fairly or fully against this Writer, who says, “Menno was the first person that opposed Infant Baptism, and that we cannot boast of our practice scarcely 300 years.”

Were the Baptists disposed to boast of antiquity, they could not only produce persons who adopted their distinguishing sentiments and practice, in the earliest ages of the Church; but also Martyrs in the cause of reformation, who suffered centuries before superstition was assailed by Luther and Calvin, or by Huss, or even by Wickliff himself.

I now proceed to notice our Author’s objections to the manner in which we administer Baptism, which is, by immersing the person baptized.

He asks, “Where is the command for dipping? Does the quantity of the elements used in an ordinance enter essentially into the nature and efficacy of that ordinance? If it do, why do not the advocates for much water use also much bread and wine, seeing there is as

† History of the Church, cent. xii. chap. 6.

positive a command for the one as the other? And he says, But let all men know that the Anabaptist mode of plunging is UNDOUBTEDLY right—BECAUSE THEY SAY IT IS—CONSEQUENTLY sprinkling MUST BE WRONG!! Great modesty and solid reasoning.” To which I reply,

(1st) That dipping is commanded in all those places in the New Testament, where baptism is enjoined. As the word of a Baptist is made so very light of by my Opponent, I am almost prohibited from producing evidence on my own authority, or that of my brethren; however, learned Pædobaptists themselves will not withhold their support on this occasion. Many offer their testimony, but I will produce three only, whose united evidence will abundantly confirm my assertions. The first, is a celebrated Catholic, who says, “To baptize signifies to plunge, as is granted by all the world.”*—The second, is the renowned Calvin, who testifies, that “The word baptize, signifies to immerse: and the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient Church.”†—The third, is the very learned Beza, who gives his evidence in these remarkable words, “Christ commanded us to be baptized; by which words IT IS CERTAIN IMMERSION IS SIGNIFIED.”‡ Can there possibly be a more plain and full answer to my Opponent? Or, can the practice of immersion meet with more direct and honourable support, than that which is given by these eminent Pædobaptists? who, to deliver such evidence in this particular case, must have been impelled, only by the all-commanding force of truth. (2nd) I know not what this Gentleman means by the efficacy of an ordinance; but I have no objection to say, that the

* Bossuet in Mr. Stennett, against Mr. Ruffen, p. 174.

† Institut. Christ. Relig. L. iv. c. xv. § 19.

‡ In Booth's Pædobap. Exam. 1st edit. p. 17.

quantity of the elements used in an ordinance, enters essentially into the nature of that ordinance; that is, a sufficient quantity; for instance, at the Lord's Supper, our Lord Jesus has commanded his Disciples to drink wine in remembrance of him: But should any Administrator insist, that there should be wine sufficient only to wet the lips of the communicants, and that this application of the element answered all the purposes of the institution: we should object; I presume my Opponent himself would remonstrate; and it would be in vain for this Innovator on the laws of Christ to say, that he made use of wine, and did so because the Saviour had enjoined it, that he used the same words as the Lord did when he instituted the holy supper, and that he by no means considered the quantity of the element, or the manner in which it is applied as essential to the nature, or to the due administration of the ordinance. My Opponent would still insist, that it was not done according to the Lord's example, and that there was not a sufficiency of wine for the communicants to obey the injunction of the Head of the Church, who when he gave the cup to his Disciples said, "Drink ye all of it:" they must drink of the wine in order to fulfil his command. A sufficient quantity of the elements and a particular application of them, are essential to the nature and due administration of the ordinance of the Lord's supper. Thus, in the ordinance of Baptism, we believe our Lord to have enjoined immersion, and all we plead for, is a sufficient quantity of water, for the person baptized to be (according to the scripture) buried with him in baptism; and so much water we judge essential to the nature and due administration of this ordinance.

Were this Writer to see a Minister of the Gospel solemnly touch the lips of an infant with bread and wine, and hear him speak of that as the due administration of the

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the Lord's supper; the ideas which he would form of such a service both as it relates to the subject and the mode, are exactly ours, when we see any of our brethren sprinkle a babe, and hear them vindicate that as scripture baptism.

(3d) When this Gentleman says, "Let all men know that the Anabaptist mode of plunging is right, because they say it is!" and exclaims "Great modesty and solid reasoning!!" I hope he does not mean to insult us; but were any one to accuse him of such an intention I know not how he would acquit himself of the charge. Would it not appear from the above statement and exclamation, that the Baptists in violation of the rules of modesty, and in contempt of reason; had vindicated immersion as the mode of scripture baptism, with only their own unsupported assertion? But has this been the case? Was it thus that Gale, Gill, the Stennetts, and many others now dead, supported the propriety and necessity of immersion? Is it by bare assertions of their own, the Baptist Writers now living vindicate and support their practice? Have they not lodged their appeal with not only sacred, but also profane Authors, and with the opinion of the most eminent Lexicographers? Have they not produced the practice of the ancient Church in their favor? and the universal practice of the Greek Church, which contains nearly one half of the professed Christians in the world? This they have done, and also produced in favor of their practice the concessions of many of the most learned Pædobaptists; yet this Writer has, what shall I call it? the assurance to insinuate that they have employed only their own unsupported assertions.

That he may evermore be ashamed to accuse us in this manner, I will close my observations on this part of the dispute, with extracts from the writings of two Pædobaptists

Pædobaptists of great eminence. The first is Doctor
 Whitby, who thus expresses himself; "It being so ex-
 pressly declared here (Rom. vi. 4.) and Col. ii. 12. that
 we are *buried with Christ in baptism*, by being buried
 under water; and the argument to oblige us to a con-
 formity to his death, by dying to sin, being taken
 hence; and this immersion being religiously observed
 BY ALL CHRISTIANS FOR THIRTEEN CENTURIES,
 and approved by our Church, and the change of it
 into sprinkling, even without any allowance from the
 author of this institution, or any licence from any
 council of the Church, being that which the Romanist
 still urgeth to justify his refusal of the cup to the
 laity; it were to be wished, that this custom might be
 again of general use." §

The second is Dr. Wall, who says, 'Their (the pri-
 mitive Christians) general and ordinary way was to
 baptize by immersion, or dipping the person into the
 water. This is so plain and clear by an infinite num-
 ber of passages, that as one cannot but pity the weak
 endeavours of such Pædobaptists as would maintain
 the negative of it; so also we ought to disown and
 show a dislike of the PROFANE SCOFFS which some
 people give to the English Antipædobaptists, merely
 for their use of dipping. It is one thing to maintain,
 that that circumstance is not absolutely necessary to
 the essence of baptism; and another, to go about to
 represent it as ridiculous and foolish, or as SHAMEFUL
 AND INDECENT; when it was in all probability the
 way by which our blessed Saviour, and for certain was
 the most usual and ordinary way by which the ancient
 Christians, did receive their baptism. As for sprink-
 ling, I say as Mr. Blake, at its first coming up in En-
 gland, *Let them defend it that use it.** On these ex-

§ In Booth's Pædobap. Exam. vol. I. p. 219. * Ut supra. p. 220, 221, 222.

tracts I make no comment, as they so completely remove the censure cast on us by the insinuations of my Opponent, and give such a full display of the very uncandid manner in which he has thought proper to treat us.

It now only remains for me to make a few reflections on the degree of importance which this Writer would give to the dispute on Baptism.

He represents it as only respecting "a mere rite—a mere form and ceremony"†—and makes a kind of pious lamentation, by saying, "When will the time arrive when professing Christians will more zealously contend for the vital power of godliness than for the mere form? When will they attend to the weightier matters of the law, and cease to tithe the herbs of their garden?" I consider Baptism as a part of gospel worship; and if he intends by a "mere form" what I conceive, and what is generally understood by such an expression, I am ready to aver, that the Gospel, so far from enjoining such worship, is entirely abhorrent from it. "The hour is now come when the Father must be worshipped in spirit and in truth." With those who consider Infant Baptism as a mere rite, a mere form and ceremony, I have no dispute. But that Believers Baptism comes under this denomination, I can by no means admit.—This comes to us, not only invested with Divine authority, but also fraught with all-important and most instructive truth. It is in full agreement with the maxim established by the Head of the Church, "*Except a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*" It addresses the understanding, demands the heart, and is highly calculated to influence the life.—

† Is it consistent to represent Baptism in one place as "a mere form," and in another to say, "God has made it a prerequisite to admission into the Kingdom of Grace?"

The energetic and convincing language of John, well becomes the Administrator of this ordinance; "*Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say within yourselves we have Abraham to our father. The ax is now laid to the root of the trees; therefore, every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire;*" and also the instructive and encouraging expressions of the Evangelist, "*As many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*"

Consistently with this, when the convinced multitude put forth the solicitous enquiry, "*What shall we do?*" Peter answered, "*Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.*" The instructed Eunuch when he came to a certain water said, "*See here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest.*" Peter does not insinuate to those to whom he sent his epistles, that Baptism is a mere rite, a mere form and ceremony; no—he tells them, "*Baptism is not the putting away the filth of the flesh,*" (as many of the Jewish ceremonies were) "*but the answer of a good conscience towards God.*"—In like manner Paul reminds the Galatians, that "*as many of them as were baptized into Christ had put on Christ.*" And he says to the Romans, "*Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.*"

No

No one can properly enforce this ordinance without insisting on "*repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*;" nor can any with propriety attend to it, but such as exercise the graces of the Spirit in expectation of a resurrection to eternal life! Does this religious service accord with the idea of a mere rite, a mere form or ceremony? Does it not rather abundantly participate of the evangelical and all interesting nature of the gospel dispensation? With whatever Infant Baptism might have ranked under the law, under the dispensation of the gospel it is certainly a most singular and forlorn service: It bespeaks itself to be an alien, as it bears no resemblance to, nor does it associate with any other engagement. The subject is unconscious and passive; but not so at the Lord's-table, nor in any other part of worship or divine service prescribed in the New Testament.

The admirers of this Exotic are many, and their solicitude for its continuance in the Church is great. Yet, in dependance on his word, who hath said, *Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up*, I pray for the speedy removal of every invention which is not in the fullest coincidence with that period, *when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*

F I N I S.



